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ABSTRACT

On the afternoon of September 3, 1812, 24 pioneers living in a settlement on the southern Indiana Territory frontier were murdered and mutilated by Indians. A tragic but familiar scene in the history of the westward expansion, the Pigeon Roost Massacre can be an effective teaching tool in Indiana studies. The massacre deals with the issues and emotions of both the settler and the Native American; therefore, it must be studied in context so that the student is not prejudiced by one side of the conflict. A history of events leading up to the massacre and its aftermath are recounted. A 13-item bibliography and three maps are included. The four lesson plans that accompany the history deal with (1) background material on the settler/Indian conflict in North America, especially the Indiana territory in the early 1800s; (2) the political decisions, national policies, and war strategies that resulted in attacks on settlers on the frontier; (3) perspectives of both sides of the conflict; and (4) details of the massacre, aftermath, and pursuit of the perpetrators. The handouts to be used with these lesson plans are provided and include time lines, maps, and articles. A list of 18 additional enrichment activities also is included. (JB)

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THE PIGEON ROOST MASSACRE

Its Cause and Impact

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THE PIGEON ROOST MASSACRE
Its Cause and Impact

On the afternoon of 1812, twenty-four pioneers living in a typical scattered settlement on the frontier of southern Indiana, were brutally murdered and mutilated by a band of marauding Indians. A tragic but familiar scene in the history of the westward expansion, the Pigeon Roost Massacre can be an effective teaching tool in Indiana studies. The massacre deals with the issues and emotions of both the settler and the Native American, therefore, the Pigeon Roost Massacre must be studied in context so that the history student is not prejudiced by one side of the conflict. Before an analysis of the massacre can be understood, it is necessary to review the conflict caused by the struggle for soil between the Native Americans and the settlers of the newly formed United States.

The conflict caused by two very different cultures wanting to inhabit the same land had its roots in colonial history. During the eighteenth century, Britain ruled the American colonies and recognized that Native Americans had the right to soil unless surrendered by treaty or conquest.[1] White settlement had been forbidden in the Ohio Valley by the Proclamation of 1763. But when the Americans gained their independence from Britain and negotiated the Treaty of Paris, Americans claimed the reward of victory was land---from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River. The American view of

the Indian role in the Revolutionary War was guilt by association. As British allies, the Americans saw the Indians as a conquered people.[2] From 1783 to 1789 both Indians and Americans claimed the eastern half of the North American continent resulting in the conflict that ultimately lead to the barbarous acts like the Pigeon Roost Massacre.

At this point, it behooves the reader to note that the research and materials used to document this conflict were originally recorded by the pioneers only, and it should be noted that the Indian story has a greater probability of error than other historical topics for this reason.[3]

At the turn of the nineteenth century, there were approximately ten thousand Indians in the Old Northwest. More that 70,000 lived west of the Mississippi River. Many Americans had never seen an Indian.[4] To the pioneer settlers it seemed the Native Americans always "vanished" before the onset of permanent settlement due to disease, migration, or assimilation.[5]

Our founding fathers had established an Indian policy of "expansion with honor."[6] The expansion of the United States depended upon a delicate balance of "Indian assent and white restraint."[7] In other words, the plan would be that the Indians would peacefully give up their lands, and the settlers would keep out of Indian territory until the government had acquired it. The government proposed a program of acculturation and assimilation based on what white leaders thought would

be best for the Indians. Yet, American culture and ideology was directly opposite of Native American values, behavior, proprieties, and beliefs about ownership of property and government.[8] The American solution to the Indian conflict was purchasing the title to the land through formal negotiations and treaties. However, the Indians had to be taught by the U.S. government that they owned the land before they could sell it.

The U.S. government inherited from the British an attitude of assimilate or be separate. Henry Knox, the Secretary of War (and therefore, head of Indian affairs) under President Washington, and President Thomas Jefferson both believed that the land should be purchased from the Indians and aid be given to help the Indians adjust to a new life, but the humane and benevolent suggestions failed to satisfy the cultural rift. Perhaps the failure was due to the half-hearted implementation, but nevertheless, any attempt to assimilate the Native Americans into American culture was quickly superseded by a policy of removal and separation.[9]

In 1785, the United States Land Ordinance established that before land could be sold publicly, Indian claims had to be purchased by the government and surveyed. The third article of the Northwest Ordinance publicly espoused a fair policy of land acquisition, but while Congress pledged that land transfers would rest upon tribal consent, they also held the power and rationale to justify coercion if necessary.[10] In 1788, Congress appropriated money for the purpose of "extin-

guishing Indian claims and extending the purchase of land beyond the limits hitherto fixed" by treaties in the Northwest Territory.[11]

By 1791, the federal government had accepted the responsibility to "civilize" the Indians, an idea to which some tribes were agreeable.[12] "Civilize" meant to be made as much like the white American as possible. It is beyond the scope of this paper to determine the ethical implication of this concept.

With civilizing the Indians and acquiring as much land as possible as goals of the American Indian policy and westward expansion movement, the territorial governor definitely faced a conflict of interest within his charged responsibilities. St. Clair and Harrison both had to be Indian superintendent and protect the Indian from the intrusion of settlement while also being the militia commander and enforce regulations that assisted the settlers in cultivating their land and establishing businesses.[13] Some historians feel Governor Harrison did give an honest effort to civilize the Northwest Territory Indians, yet only one of all the treaties he negotiated provided a specific program of acculturation. This was in 1804 in Vincennes with the Delaware.

Not only were Harrison's attempts feeble, but the total territorial effort was sabotaged by a power struggle between William Wells and Little Turtle versus John Johnston, the Indian agent at Fort Wayne, and William Kirke, a Quaker

who came to Indiana to teach husbandry to the Indians. In addition, Harrison was plagued by troubles with the Prophet and Tecumseh forcing subduing the Indians to become a priority over civilizing them. By the time Thomas Jefferson left the presidency in March of 1809, tremendous gains in land had been made, but little progress in assimilating the Indians into American culture had occurred.[14] In any case, the solutions were too feeble and the problems were too great.

The first part of what later became the state of Indiana was negotiated in the Treaty of Greenville, Ohio in 1795. (See appendix A) When the terms of peace after the Battle of Fallen Timbers were accepted, the Indians gave up two-thirds of Ohio, a small portion of southeastern Indiana and sixteen tracts at portages along the rivers, plus they promised to cease warring and accept the boundaries agreed upon. The Indians, especially the Shawnee, were forced to migrate into north-central Indiana. Tecumseh and the Prophet, Shawnee brothers and respected Indian leaders, resented this treaty and tried to gain support from other tribes. Tecumseh advocated joint consent, that Indian land belonged to all tribes and could not be negotiated by just one chief. The Prophet was a religious leader, and he scorned the white man's ways, trying to persuade his brothers to live without the Long Knives' "civilized" material possessions.

In June of 1803, a disagreement over the Vincennes tract from the Treaty of Greenville forced Harrison to call a

council with the Indians. However, he did not include the Shawnee leaders.[15] Over the next few years this disagreement gave Harrison the opportunity to renegotiate, and he gained significantly more land for the United States, thus fulfilling orders from the U.S. government. The Kaskaskia Indians ceded the area between Clarksville and Vincennes. More cessions were made in 1804 and 1805.[16] (See appendix B)

By 1806, the Prophet's campaigns in the Delaware villages along the White River were causing uprisings.[17] Within the year, settlers were building blockhouses for protection, and the southern part of the Indiana Territory was organized and protected by the territorial militia, U.S. Rangers and scouts. In the summer of 1807, the Prophet held a great council of Indians of the Northwest in Greenville, Ohio. As a religious figure, he proposed ending the Indian's dependence on white men and serving the Great Spirit.

Harrison's distrust of the Shawnee leaders increased, and he wrote to the Secretary of War that he feared hostilities. By 1809, tensions between tribes over land negotiations with Harrison caused great frustration among the Indians. Harrison was convinced the Prophet was planning an attack. Finally, in the fall of 1809, the Americans gained the New Purchase which gave the United States' government forty-eight million acres of land that had been acquired through federal negotiations since the Treaty at Greenville in 1795.[18] (See appendix A)

In the summer of 1811, there was an increase in the number of horse thefts and murders in the Indiana Territory. The Indians were in a state of economic depression due to wars in France which were reducing the market for furs.[19] Finally in November of 1811, the tension between Harrison and the Prophet climaxed and resulted in the controversial battle of the Battle of Tippecanoe. Harrison's ambiguous defeat of the Prophet resulted in the Prohphet's loss of power and influence.

The Battle of Tippecanoe also divided the tribes further and thus weakened Tecumseh's plans for a confederacy. The Indians of the Northwest became even more dependent upon British aid. The Battle of Tippecanoe was a turning point in the British role in the American conflict with the native inhabitants of the continent. Before Tippecanoe the British had discouraged hostilities against the Americans, supplying only food and ammunition for hunting. After Tippecanoe, however, the British withdrew their orders to be neutral and began issuing more weapons.[20]

The conflicts during Harrison's term as governor set the stage for the first year of the War of 1812, the year when America went to war once again against the British and the year of the fateful Pigeon Roost Massacre. The events leading up to the War of 1812 are necessary to focus the reader's understanding on the state of mind of the Indian and perhaps the white settlers of the Indiana Territory.

The Indians had fought battles, but lost the wars.[21] Cooperating with the Americans had gained them nothing.[22] Britain supplied them food, while Americans took their land and moved them west. So when war was declared on Britain on June 18, 1812, it makes sense that the Indians joined forces with the British.

Indiana was not a major theatre of operations in the War of 1812, but it was a stage where Indian frustration was vented. The curtain rose in Chicago at Fort Dearborn. On August 15, Indians massacred some officers, soldiers, and families evacuating the fort. Half of the garrison, plus two women and twelve children were killed, among them William Wells. The next day Detroit's General Hull surrendered to the British without firing a shot. These victories strengthened the Indian's confidence and opended the gates to depredations in the Indiana Territory.[23]

Indians attacked both Fort Harrison at Terre Haute and Fort Wayne in the first week of September. On September 3, two young braves killed two farmers cutting hay north of the Fort Harrison stockade. A surprise attack was foiled,so six hundred Indians, mostly Kickapoo who were long time friends of the Shawnee,attacked the fort under the command of Captain Zachary Taylor. The Indian leading the seige was Chief Pakoisheecan. He crept upon the fort and set fire to one of the walls.[24] The main blockhouse burned to the ground, but with

only fifty soldiers to protect the garrison, the fort was saved, and the Indians withdrew. Some stayed in the area killing livestock and burning abandoned cabins.

The attack on Fort Wayne began September 5, 1812. The fort was seiged three times unsuccessfully before September 12 when Harrison arrived with two-thousand-seven-hundred men. His soldiers repulsed the five hundred Miami and Potawatomie. Detachments of troops were sent out across northern Indiana to destroy deserted Indian villages and cornfields.

The Pigeon Roost Massacre occurred the same week as the attacks on Fort Wayne and Fort Harrison. Some historians indicate the massacre was conducted by the Indians to prevent any strengthening of troops at Forts Harrison and Wayne.[25] Pigeon Roost actually occurred first, on the evening of September 3, and since it appears as though Fort Harrison was attacked prematurely, it seems reasonable that the assault on the pioneer settlement may have been for the purpose of discouraging Kentucky reinforcements being sent north.

There are many plausible causes for the Indian motive behind the massacre at Pigeon Roost. The Northwest Indians had been incensed by the Battle of Tippecanoe. When Fort Michilimackinac and Forts Dearborn and Detroit were captured, the Indians became bold.[26] The British were also offering a five dollar bounty on scalps.

Settlement had not been encouraged along the edge of the southern Indiana frontier, except in blockhouses.[27]

There were three blockhouses in the area of the Pigeon Roost settlement. One was at Vienna, six miles north of the founder, William Collings' house, another was eight miles southeast at Silver Creek, and another was five miles south of Collings' cabin at his son, Zebulon Collings' farm. In August of 1812, acting Governor John Gibson had asked the Mounted Rangers under Colonel William Hargrove to "keep vigilance" because William Henry Harrison's militia was heading north.[28] Indeed, at the time of the massacre, many of the men of Pigeon Roost were off fighting in the War of 1812.

Pigeon Roost was not a closely knit village but a settlement of scattered cabins several square miles south of Vienna in what is now Scott County. It was about twenty miles north of Louisville and fifteen miles north of Charlestown. Pigeon Roost was so named because of the ample number of pigeons in the area, and it was located on an old Indian trail that went from Vallonia in Jackson County through Washington and Scott Counties to Clark's Grant, Charlestown and ended at the Falls of the Ohio. The settlement was founded by Kentucky families shortly after Harrison's treaty at Fort Wayne in 1809 which established the ten o'clock line. Most of the new settlers were relatives or neighbors of William E. Collings, a sixty year old Revolutionary war veteran who was a crack shot with his Kentucky rifle. There were about forty settlers in all.

There were no permanent Indian villages in southern Indiana in 1812. The settlers were accustomed to seeing Shawnee, Delaware and Potawatomie hunting parties in the area, and they often traded or engaged in friendly shooting matches.[29] William Collings had established quite a reputation among the Indians as a "Long Knife."

Some historians believe the settlers were acquainted with their murderers.[30] The leader of the raiding party was Missilemetaw, a counselor to Tecumseh and the uncle of Logan.[31] One scholar claims the Indians were Shawnee from Lake County[32] while another declares they were Kickapoo from Illinois.[33] Another identifies them as mostly Shawnee, a few Miami, and a Delaware guide who was known to the settlers, Little Kill Buck.[34]

On September 2, 1812, Captain John Norris of Clark County, a veteran wounded in the Battle of Tippecanoe, arrived at William Collings cabin for the purpose of making plans to build a fort and stockade due to the rumors of unrest.[35] By the next evening the slaughter had begun.

The Indians arrived first at the cabin of Elias Payne. (See appendix C) Mrs. Payne and her seven children were killed, scalped and mutilated, their flesh being hung in the trees. Blood stains indicated the killings occurred around the farm. Bodies were drug into the house. Household goods were scattered, and feather beds ripped apart. Then the cabin

was torched.[36]

The Indians traveled south, finding Elias Payne and his brother-in-law, Isaac Coffman in the woods looking for bee trees. Coffman was killed instantly and scalped, but his skeleton was not found until years later. Payne was fatally shot but managed to escape where he collapsed in the woods.

In the meantime, Jeremiah Payne, Elias's brother, was warned when his cows ran home with arrows stuck in their sides. Jeremiah took his wife and child to the Vienna blockhouse, then he went to Elias's home and found the carnage. Jeremiah returned to the blockhouse and found Elias's dog, who had come for aid for his master. The dog led Jeremiah to his brother's side, but it was too late to save Elias. When Jeremiah went for help, Elias died. Elias Payne was buried alongside the road to Vienna, but the grave was destroyed by interstate 65. Jeremiah then headed south to get help from the Clark County militia.

The Indians moved further south and discovered Mrs. Henry (Rachel) Collings returning home from a visit at the Payne's. She was killed. Her unborn child was ripped from her womb, scalped, and left in its dead mother's arms.

The Indians then came to the Richard Collings farm. Richard was away with the militia, and his wife and seven children were murdered. An infant was killed when it was swung by its feet and its head was bashed against a tree.[37]

The next murder was at the home of Henry Collings. Henry was shot in the head while working in his flax field. He was left for dead, but he was found the next day in the flax house where he had tried to crawl for safety. He died two days after the massacre, but only after identifying Little Kill Buck as his murderer.

Resistence was encountered at the patriarch's home. William Collings and Captain Norris saw the Indians approach Henry Collings' cabin. William's two youngest children, Lydia and John helped in the defense. Lydia molded bullets, and John rounded up the cows. Collings shot and killed an Indian on Henry's front porch, and he killed another as the Indian chased John with a tomahawk. Yet another Indian died as he disguised himself in Mrs. Henry Collings' clothes and approached William's cabin.

Norris, the two children, and Collings tried to escape to the blockhouse. Collings was shot at, but only his Kentucky rifle was wounded. The shot sheared the lock off the gun, leaving Collings without a weapon. Norris and the two children were lost in the cornfield, but made it to Zebulon Collings blockhouse by dawn. William was forced to hide at the Richie cabin, but he,too, arrived at the blockhouse about daybreak.

The gunfire and alerted other settlers to danger. After the rendezvous with William, the Indians headed southwest. They found Mrs. John Morris, a child, and John's mother trying to escape to William's house. All three were murdered.

Five other families managed to escape to safety and survived the massacre. Dr. John Richie, who was married to William Collings daughter, picked up his pregnant and ill wife, Sichy, put her on his back, and carried her through the cornfield to the woods. In the morning he made it to the lower blockhouse. Five weeks later, John and Sichy had a baby boy, Richard.

Ben Yount, who lived east of Pigeon Roost, heard shots and moved his pregnant wife and two children to the Silver Creek blockhouse. Mrs. Yount gave birth to a daughter, Rachel, that night.

Mrs. Betsey Johnson, a sister to Elias and Jeremiah Payne, was warned by the shooting and screams. As she headed to the safety of the blockhouse, she looked back and saw her cabin in flames.

Mrs. Beal, whose husband was in the militia, heard guns and hid herself and two children in a sinkhole until night, then she made it to the Silver Creek blockhouse.

Mrs. John Biggs (Jane Collings), two children and an infant ran into the woods to hide as Indians torched her house. The Indians searched the woods and came quite close to her hiding place. Mrs. Biggs, in an effort to comfort her fussy infant and spare their lives, covered her baby's face with a shawl and accidently suffocated it. The three survivors and the dead infant arrived at the blockhouse at daybreak.

Jeremiah Payne arrived at daybreak in Charlestown where he roused the Clark County volunteers. One-hundred-fifty to two-hundred mounted riflemen under Major John McCoy, the brother of Mrs. Jeremiah Payne, arrived at the Zebulon Collings blockhouse at about two o'clock in the afternoon. Three men, five women and sixteen children had lost their lives. Two children had been kidnapped--a three year old girl, Ginsey McCoy (a cousin to Mrs. Jeremiah Payne) and ten year old Peter Huffman. Peter was sold and carried into Canada. The government obtained his return to southern Indiana in 1824, but he tired of a settled life and left. Ginsey grew up and married an Indian. Her uncle, Reverend Isaac McCoy discovered her on a mission trip. She did return to visit her family, but she went back to the Indian way of life.

Isaac Naylor, the nephew of John Biggs (whose wife escaped the massacre) was among the riflemen under McCoy. He considered the American fall at Detroit disgraceful, and he feared that Indian depredations like the Pigeon Roost Massacre would be a natural consequence of the War of 1812.[38]

The volunteers and rangers gathered at the settlement and buried what was left of the dead. Most bodies had been consumed by fire, but some children had been pierced by sharp sticks and were left sitting against trees.[39] Cattle had been killed and horses stolen.[40] The Indians' trail was followed to the Muscatatuck River where the men were forced to camp at night due to swollen waters. At daybreak the

search party abandoned the hunt due to quarrelling among groups.[41]

In the meantime a scouting party of Rangers lead by Captain Henry Dewalt (Devault) discovered and attacked the retreating raiders. John Zink of the Rangers was killed and the Indians escaped.[42]

The immediate results of the Pigeon Roost massacre was that the settlers on the northwest frontiers of Clark, Jefferson, Harrison and Knox Counties lived in a state of alarm for two more years. Some moved back to Kentucky or lived in forts and blockhouses until the war ended in 1814. Even residents of Madison fled to Kentucky, then returned to Jefferson County where they converted the courthouse to a garrison and there made their residence through 1814.[43]

Over a broader area, the Pigeon Roost massacre "galvinized frontier defenses" in the entire Northwest."[44] The governor of Kentucky decided to raid Indiana Indians. He organized four thousand militia under Major General Samuel Hopkins. In mid-October, he and his troops got lost in the prairies west of the Wabash.[45] Twelve hundred volunteers were sent to help Fort Harrison and defend Illinois against the Kickapoo on Nov. 11 of 1812. Hopkins and a number of regulars under Captain Taylor destroyed a large Kickapoo village, burned a rebuilt Prophetstown, and burned a large Winnebago village. They met no resistance until November 22,when Hopkin's men were ambushed. Eighteen Americans were killed.

The final campaign of 1812 was commandeered by Colonel John B. Campbell. Under Harrison's orders he destroyed Indian villages on the Mississinewa River. However, Indians attacked the American camp on December 17. Eight died, and forty-two were wounded, but the Indians were repulsed.

The curtain closed on the year 1812 with Harrison's resignation as Governor of the Indiana Territory on December 28. Secretary Gibson acted as governor until Thomas Posey took over in April of 1813. The War of 1812 continued, but no major massacres or campaigns occurred in Indiana that year.[46]

Back home, closer to Pigeon Roost, more forts and blockhouses were built along the line of the frontier, and they were garrisoned by militia.[47] John Tipton was in command at Fort Vallonia near Pigeon Roost, and he lead a minor raid in March of 1813. A skirmish with a small band of Indians occurred on an island in the Driftwood River, and one Indian was killed. In June General Joseph Bartholomew lead one-hundred-thirty-seven men on a search of Delaware towns along White River. Tipton and others believed Indians causing mischief were protected by friendly Delaware.[48] However, the towns were deserted, but the corn crops were destroyed. Most of the Indians had moved their families out of the territory when the warriors followed Tecumseh to Canada to fight the British. Colonel William Russell lead five-hundred-seventy-

three men through Delaware, Mississinewa and Wabash villages. They did not find any Indians, but they destroyed the dwellings. The militia believed the surest way to prevent attack was to break up the nesting places.[49]

Harrison defeated the British and their Indian allies at the Battle of Thames(Moraviantown) in October of 1813. Tecumseh was killed, and Harrison secured an armistice with seven tribes.[50] The Treaty of Ghent ended the War of 1812 in December of 1814.

The Pigeon Roost Massacre was a long time ago. The survivors returned, buried their dead, rebuilt their cabins and made a living in the wilderness. These pioneers paved the way for later settlers and ultimately statehood. The horror of war faded and was buried with the victims. Modern historians recognize that Native Americans inflicted atrocities against white settlers. Their motives may have been justified by the degredation forced upon the natives of this continent by the United States government. This conflict of culture resulted in tragedy, murder, and the deterioration of two cultures.

The United States took Native American land in the name of freedom for its citizens. It was a political decision having great moral consequences. Let not this painful lesson be obscured in the pages of a history book.

Footnotes

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3. Marshall Smelser, "Tecumseh, Harrison and the War of 1812," Indiana Magazine of History, Vol. LXV, No. 1, (March, 1969): 27.

4. Ibid, p.28

5. Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., "Americans versus Indians: The Northwest Ordinance, Territory Making, and Native Americans," Indiana Magazine of History, Vol. 84, No. 1, (March, 1988): 96.

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7. Ibid, p. 96.

8. Ibid, p.91.

9. Ibid, p. 94 .

10. Ibid, p. 95 and 107.

11. Harmon, p.28.

12. Joseph A. Parsons, Jr. "Civilizing the Indians of the Old Northwest, 1800-1810," Indiana Magazine of History, Vol. LVI, No. 3, (September, 1960): 198.

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14. Parsons, p.216.

15. John D. Barnhart and Dorothy L. Riker, Indiana to 1816: The Colonial Period, (Indiana Historical Bureau and Indiana Historical Society: Indianapolis, 1971), p. 370.

16. John D. Barnhart and Donald F. Carmony, Indiana From Frontier to Industrial Commonwealth, Vol. 1., (Lewis Historical Publishing Co., Inc.: New York, 1954), pp. 103-104.

17. Barnhart and Riker, p. 370.

18. Smelser, p.31.

19. Ibid, p.32.

20. Ibid, p.32.

21. Barnhart and Carmony, p.201.

22. Smelser, p. 30.

23. Harold Allison, The Tragic Saga of Indiana Indians, (Graphic Design of Indiana: 1986), p. 173.

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25. Ibid, p. 131.

26. The Indianapolis News, July 13, 1915.

27. Carl R. Bogardus, Sr., M.D., "Southern Indiana's Last Indian Raid," Outdoor Indiana, Vol. 43, No. 6, (July/August, 1978), p. 30.

28. Barnhart and Riker, p. 405.

29. Bogardus, p. 30.

30. Judge Isaac Naylor, "An Account of Pigeon Roost Massacre," Indiana Historical Society Publications, Vol. 2, No. 4,(Bowen-Merrill: Indianapolis, 1895), p. 129-130.

31. Indiana, Past and Present, A Monthly Magazine of Hoosier Progress. Vol. 1, No. 5, (October,1914), p. 10.

32. Ibid.

33. Ross F. Lockridge, The Story of Indiana, (Harlow Publishing Co.: Oklahoma City, 1955), p.179.

34. William Wray Johnston, "Entire Settlement Wiped Out 127 Years Ago in Scott County," The Indianapolis Star, July 23, 1939.

35. Bogardus, p. 32.

36. The chronology of the massacre was identical in nearly all research material. The summary in this paper is basically a compilation of three main sources: Jacob Piatt Dunn, True Indian Stories,(Sentinel Printing Co.: Indianapolis, 1909),p. 144-163;

Bogardus, p. 30-36 (see footnote #27); and Arville Funk,"The Pigeon Roost Massacre," The Hoosier Scrapbook,(ALFCO Publishers: Corydon, 1981), p.4-5.

37. Bob Sculley, "Indians Killed 24 Pioneers in Pigeon Roost Slaughter," Louisville Courier Journal and Times, October 6, 1968.

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40. Lockridge, p. 168.

41. Dunn, p. 158.

42. John B. Dillon, A History of Indiana,(Bingham and Doughty, 1859), p. 493.

43. Bogardus, p. 36.

44. Ibid, p.32.

45. Dunn, p.161.

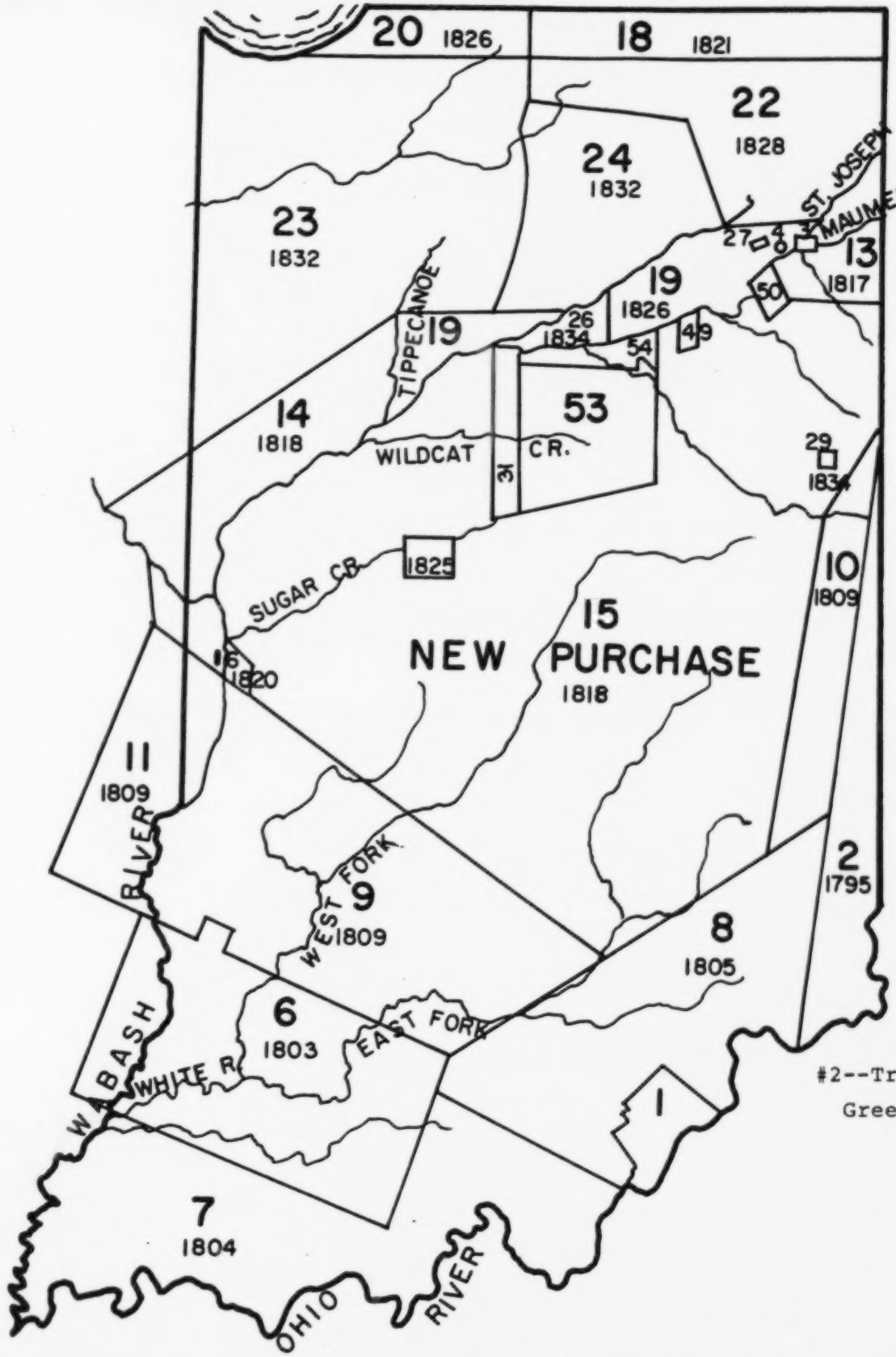
46. Bogardus, p.32.

47. Naylor, p. 129-130.

48. Funk, p. 4.

49. Naylor, p. 129-130.

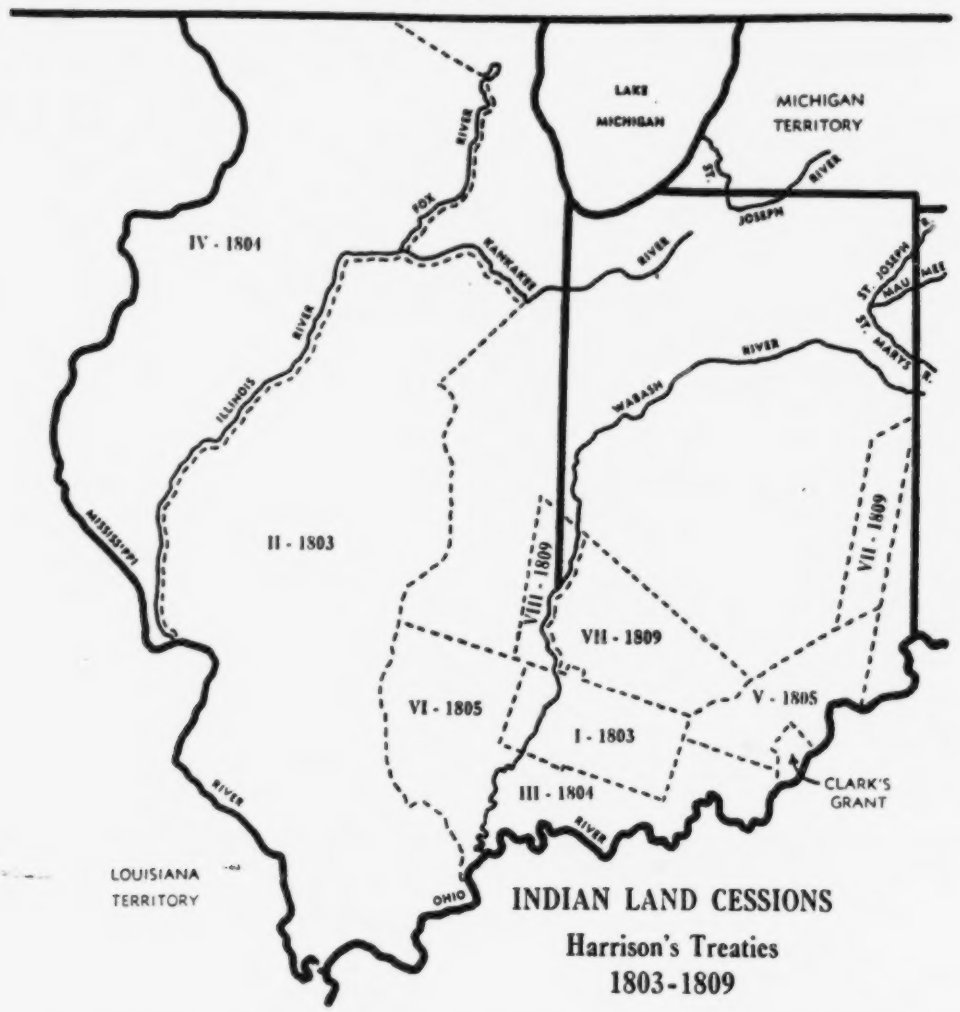
50. A.M. Gibson, The Kickapoos, Lords of the Middle Border, (University of Oklahoma Press: 1963), p. 69.



#2--Treaty of Greenville

from Outdoor Indiana, page 37

APPENDIX B



I. June 7, 1803, at Fort Wayne, with the Delawares, Shawnee, Potawatomi, Miami, Eel Rivers, Wea, Kickapoo, Piankashaw, and Kaskaskia.

II. August 13, 1803, at Vincennes, with the Kaskaskia.

III. August 18 and 27, 1804, at Vincennes, with the Delawares and Piankashaw.

IV. November 3, 1804, at St. Louis, with the Sauk and Foxes.

V. August 21, 1805, at Grouseland, with the Delawares, Potawatomi, Miami, Eel Rivers, and Wea.

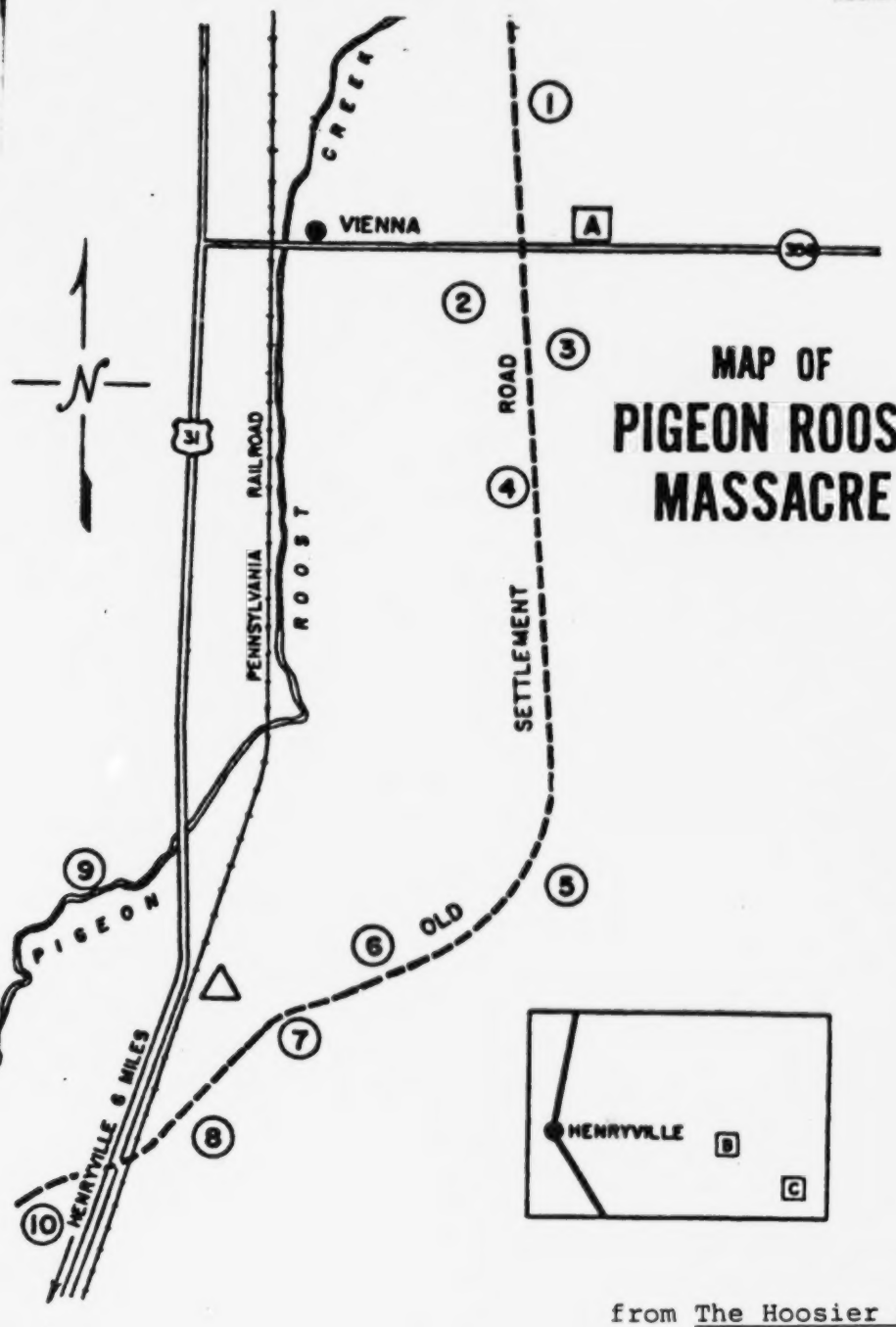
VI. December 30, 1805, at Vincennes, with the Piankashaw.

VII. September 30, 1809, at Fort Wayne, with the Delawares, Potawatomi, Miami, Eel Rivers, and Wea.

VIII. December 9, 1809, at Vincennes, with the Kickapoo.

from Barnhart and Riker, Indiana to 1816 the Colonial Period, Indiana Historical Bureau and Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, 1971. p. 377.

APPENDIX C



from The Hoosier Scrapbook,
Arville L. Funk, 1981,
Corydon, IN, page 5

LEGEND:

(1)	Elias Payne Home, Family killed	(8)	John Morris' Home, Family killed
(2)	Elias Payne and Isaac Coffman killed	(9)	John Bigg's Home
(3)	Jeremiah Payne's Home	(10)	Dr. John Ritchie's Home
(4)	Mrs. Henry Collings killed	△	Present Monument
(5)	Richard Collings' Home, Family killed	[A]	Vienna Blockhouse
(6)	Henry Collings' Home	[B]	Zebulon Collings' Home and Blockhouse
(7)	William E. Collings' Home	[C]	Silver Creek Blockhouse

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PIGEON ROOST MASSACRE LESSON PLANS

Candace Taff Carr

On the afternoon of September 3, 1812, twenty-four pioneers living in a typical scattered settlement on the southern Indiana Territory frontier, were brutally murdered and mutilated by a band of marauding Indians. This was a tragic but familiar scene in the history of the westward expansion. In the context of the War of 1812, this attack on a small, unprotected settlement was NOT a surprise. Men were gone to war, Detroit had just been captured by the British and the Indians, and Harrison had negotiated several unpopular treaties with the Indians. In the narrower scope of Indiana's history, this massacre was perhaps the most atrocious of any Indian-settler conflict, its impact was felt for several years afterward. However, it is important that the history student study the Pigeon Roost Massacre in context so that the student is not prejudiced by the violence or by one side of the conflict.

Through background information on the historical setting, and through details of the massacre itself, from a site visit, and through classroom discussion these lessons will shed a great deal of insight on this period of history, and it should give students a better understanding of how political conflicts can become personal tragedies.

The content of these lessons include:

1) background material on the settler/Indian conflict of America, especially the Indiana territory in the early 1800's

2) introduction of the political decisions, national policies, and war strategies that resulted in attacks on settlers on the frontier

3) perspectives of both sides of the conflict; both the settler and Indian (as much as can be allowed using white man's resources)

4) details of the massacre, aftermath, and pursuit of perpetrators

The objectives are that students will:

1) determine the cause and effect of the Pigeon Roost Massacre

2) analyze the reliability of sources; discriminating between primary and secondary sources; identifying personal bias

3) apply written accounts to a variety of maps, locating landmarks, the route and geographic features

4) appreciate the resourcefulness of their pioneer and Indian ancestors

5) experience a visit to a historic site, recognizing the importance of preservation

Grade level: 4th grade Social Studies, prior to statehood
5th grade Social Studies, movement west
8th grade, American History
11th grade, American History

Teaching strategies used:

1) Lecture, due to scarcity of material at an appropriate reading level

2) Reading documents (personal accounts, newspaper articles)

3) Discussion, for sharing feelings and opinions; large group and small groups should be used due to sensitivity of subject matter

Lesson # 1 -- Overview; Indian Conflict in the Indiana Territory around 1813

Objectives: Students will:

1) recognize events of early 1800's that led to conflict in 1813
2) determine the cause and effect of the Pigeon Roost massacre
3) describe the historic and geographic setting of events of Indian conflict in 1813 and locate on a map

Materials: Quote by Zebulon Collings
TimeLine with dates, but no events
Classroom map of Indiana or Great Lakes region

Introduction:

Teacher reads quote by Zebulon Collings; ask students what event might generate such remarks

Development:

Teacher lectures on the conflict of culture in the Indiana Territory from 1800 to 1813

Students can fill out a timeline with the dates written in, they can fill in the events as the teacher covers them

Conclusion:

Students locate sections of land gained by treaties, Battle of Tippecanoe, site of Pigeon Roost Massacre

Students and teacher should recall and retell the sequence of events leading up to the massacre

Teacher should present the material matter-of-factly with sensitivity to the brutality ; the moral issue will be dealt with in Lesson # 4.

Quote by Zebulon Collings

"The manner in which I used to work in those perilous times was as follows: On all occasions I carried my rifle, tomahawk, and butcher knife, with a loaded pistol in my belt. When I went to plow, I laid my gun on the plowed ground and stuck up a stick by it for a mark, so I could get it quickly in case it was wanted. I had two good dogs. I took one into the house, leaving the other out. The one outside was expected to give the alarm, which would cause the one inside to bark. I would then be awakened, and my guns were always loaded. I kept my horses in a stable close to the house, which had a porthole so that I could shoot to the stable door. During the two years, I never went from home with any certainty of returning--not knowing the minute I might receive a ball from an unknown hand; but in the midst of all these dangers, God, who never sleeps nor slumbers, has kept me."

from John Dillon History of Indiana, Indianapolis: Bingham & Doughty, 1859, pp. 492-494. These words are from a family member of the settlement raided in the Pigeon Roost Massacre. Dillon states, "many settlers on the northern and western frontiers of Clark, Jefferson, Harrison and Knox counties lived in a state of alarm" after the massacre "until the close of the war (of 1812) in 1815."

Indian Conflict Timeline

1763	White settlement forbidden in the Ohio valley by the Proclamation of 1763
1783-1789	Treaty of Paris allows Americans to settle west of the Applachian Mountains; Both Indians and settlers claim land
1785	Land Ordinance claims that before land can be sold publicly, Indian claims must be purchased and surveyed
1787	Northwest Ordinance is put into place, creating the Northwest Territory
1795	Treaty of Greenville; first part of Indiana is negotiated with the Indians; the Shawnee migrate to North Carolina; Tecumseh and the Prophet begin plans for Indian confederation
1800	Harrison becomes the Governor of the Indiana Territory
1803-1809	Series of land cessions are made with Harrison
1811	Battle of Tippecanoe
June 1812	War is declared on Britain
August 15	Fort Dearborn Massacre
August 16	Detroit is surrendered to British/ Indians
Sept. 3	Pigeon Roost Massacre
Sept. 4-12	Siege on Fort Harrison
Sept. 5-12	Siege on Fort Wayne
Oct./Nov.	Major Hopkins Expeditions, resulting in Spurs Defeat
Dec. 1812	Battle of Mississinewa
Dec. 28	Harrison resigns as Governor/ Gibson takes over
Mar., 1813	Battle of Tipton's Island
April 1813	Thomas Posey becomes Governor of Territory

June, 1813 Bartholomew's raid

Oct., 1813 Battle of Thames/ Tecumseh is killed

Dec. 1814 Treaty of Ghent ends War of 1812

Indian Conflict Timeline

1763 _____

1783-1789 _____

1785 _____

1787 _____

1795 _____

1800 _____

1803-1809 _____

1811 _____

June 1812 _____

August 15, 1812 _____

August 16, 1812 _____

September 3, 1812 _____

September 4-12, 1812 _____

September 5-12, 1812 _____

October/November, 1812 _____

December, 1812 _____

December 28, 1812 _____

March, 1813 _____

April, 1813 _____

June, 1813 _____

October, 1813 _____

December, 1814 _____

38

37 INDIANA during the WAR OF 1812

Indiana and during the War of 1812

Map Key:
1. Fort Dearborn massacre, August 1812
2. Fort Detroit surrender
3. Fort Wayne seige
4. Battle of Mississinewa
5. Fort Greenville
6. Fort Harrison seige
7. Fort Knox (Vincennes)
8. Charlestown
9. Clarksville

Lesson # 2 -- The Pigeon Roost Massacre

Objectives: Students will:

1) compare and contrast eye witness and scholarly accounts of the massacre

2) determine biases and differences in accounts

3) transfer knowledge from a written text to a variety of maps

Materials: Teacher prepared site maps (1 per student)
pencils, markers or crayons
copy of Indiana Sentinel account, Dillon account, and Funk article

Introduction: Locate site on large classroom map of Indiana, finding Muscatatuck River and Charlestown

Teacher reads aloud Indiana Sentinel account while students record names of victims

Development: Teacher reads the Dillon account while students record names of victims (this time it can be done at the board)

Discuss any discrepancies of facts, reliability of author, develop criteria for judging reliability

Conclusion: Give students a copy of the Funk article; this can be done in small groups or individually
Have the students answer questions comparing and contrasting all three accounts

THE MASSACRE
AT
PIGEON ROOST

Prepared by the staff of the
Public Library of Fort Wayne and Allen County
1953

FOREWORD

Fort Wayne was relatively undisturbed by the outbreak of the War of 1812. Although the Indian allies of the British opened hostilities elsewhere, most of Indiana remained quiet.

That quiet, however, was shattered by the attack on Pigeon Roost in Scott County, September 3, 1812. While a group of Indians murdered the inhabitants of the little hamlet, others were gathering to lay siege to Fort Wayne.

The following accounts of the Pigeon Roost massacre vary in some details. Messrs. Paine and Moffit in the first account may be the same persons referred to as Payne and Coffman in the second account. Likewise, the names Collins and Dewalt appear as Collings and Devault in the second account. These items are reprinted as published, except that the staff of the Public Library of Fort Wayne and Allen County has reconciled grammar, punctuation, and spelling with current practice.

from The Massacre at Pigeon Roost
by the Public Libray at Fort Wayne
and Allen County, 1953. Reprinted
with the editor's permission.

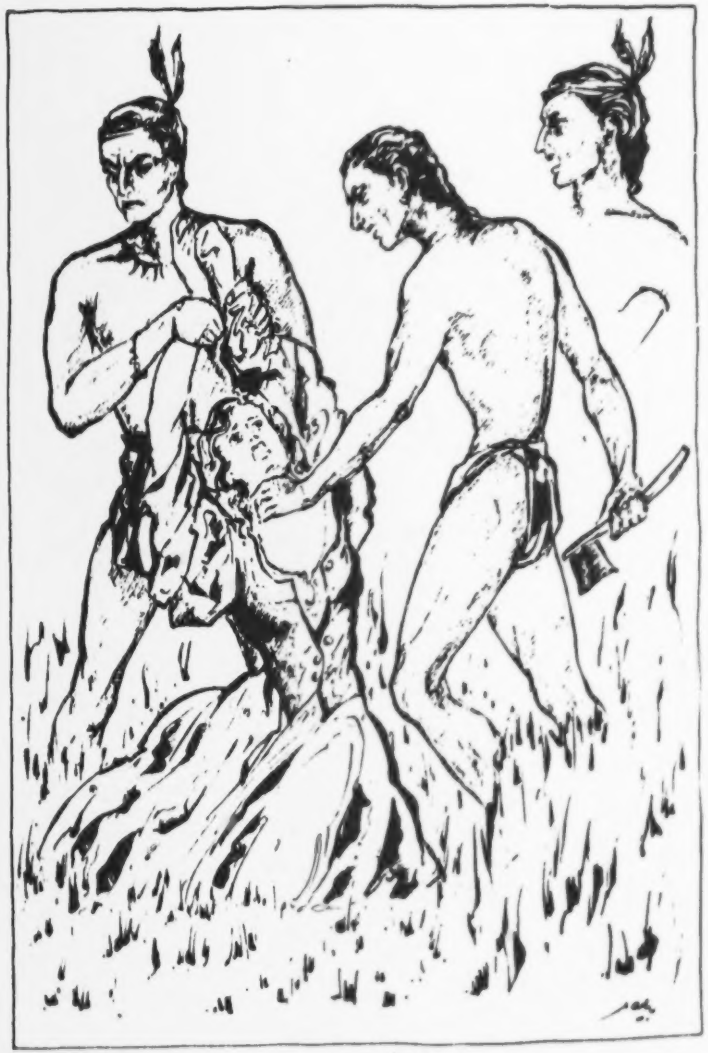
Indiana State Sentinel

Mr. Editor: A little fiction once appeared in one of the Bedford papers, founded upon the enormities which the Indians committed on the settlement of Pigeon Roost. It showed its author to be ignorant of the whole transaction to one who was a settler of the same settlement.

Until near the close of 1812, the settlers of Pigeon Roost in Scott County in this state lived in comparative peace with the red man. We had conciliated his favor and studiously avoided giving offense. The Indians were likewise seemingly peaceable; prior to this time, they had committed no grievous outrage upon any of the settlers. But near the close of the memorable year of 1812, there were some slight whisperings of danger to be apprehended from a neighboring tribe of Indians. As such reports were frequently put in circulation for the purpose of alarming the credulous, we gave them but little credence. We knew that the Battle of Tippecanoe had just been fought and that the celebrated Shawnee Prophet, at the head of the combined Indian forces, had been defeated by General Harrison; therefore, we foolishly supposed that we now had nothing to fear. But a short time convinced us, to our sorrow, that there is sometimes truth even in "flying reports."

On the third day of September, a party of eleven Indians came into our vicinity, and the outrages and savage brutality then and there perpetrated upon innocent helplessness made an impression on my mind that can never be effaced. Although this has been years ago, still I remember its details as distinctly as though it were but yesterday.

About four o'clock in the evening, they came to the house of Elias Paine



on the Pigeon Roost fork of the Muscatatuck. Messrs. Paine and Moffit, brothers-in-law, were out a short distance from home when they were attacked by the Indians and assassinated; Paine's wife and six children shared the same fate. From here, they pursued the path leading to the house of Richard Collins, and on the way, they met the wife of Henry Collins on an errand to her relations. She fled some three hundred yards before she was captured, though the Indian is remarkable for fleetness. Mrs. Collins was inhumanly butchered and left in the woods to feast the savage beasts of the forest.

Pursuing their merciless way, they arrived at the snug little farm-house of Richard Collins, who was then on a campaign into the interior. They entered the dwelling and, with pitiless cruelty, slaughtered in cold blood the wife and seven children of one who, though far distant from home, was no doubt at the same moment contemplating the domestic happiness of an endeared family circle, for it was the silent hour of rest. A more melancholy spectacle could not be imagined than was here presented--beautiful and bright-eyed little girls and boys lying side by side in death, their lovely little forms horribly mutilated. The youngest was three months old; its little head was struck from its body and placed to its mother's nipple, presenting a most revolting sight.

I am tracing this bloody trail, not because it gives me pleasure to recite those cowardly deeds, but to rescue to some degree from oblivion the memory of those who were the unfortunate victims. I have since often regretted that we were not more zealous in keeping in readiness a protective

force. Five men could have defeated them and saved to country and friends the lives of many valuable citizens. It was the want of consideration. We were reposing secure, as we supposed, unconscious of the treachery around us.

The peaceful abode of Mr. Morris was the next to suffer. He too was in the service of his country. Mrs. Morris, her mother, and their innocent little children were tortured to the extinction of life. Hard by was the house of William Collins; and, on their way thither, two of the Indians fell in with Henry Collins. He was a man of Herculean proportions and fought his antagonists long and hard with nought but the weapons given him by the God of nature. He conquered but died soon afterwards from his wounds. Mr. Morris and his family were visiting at the residence of William Collins; and here, for the first time, the Indians were resisted. Four of their number were immediately shot down and another badly wounded. Under cover of the night, these two families were enabled to escape by retreating into a cornfield. The Indians buried their dead under a large log and concealed their wounded one in the brush with provisions and water for a month. At the expiration of that time they came and took him away, as it was afterwards ascertained. They had now collected together considerable plunder; and, after firing the house, they beat a retreat, starting about three o'clock in the morning.

During the evening of the third the wife of John Biggs, hearing the report of firearms in the direction of Collinses', concealed her children and, with the heroism of a woman, ventured her life to learn the suspected cause.

Finding her father's house surrounded by savages, she fled to the residence of Robert Biggs, a distance of two miles, and gave the first alarm about the hour of midnight. Soon a company of nine men marched to the scene of action with all possible speed. We arrived at the spot where, but a few hours previous, had stood the pleasant little residence of William Collins, now a heap of glowing embers. We were here joined by others, until our little band became quite formidable. We were soon upon the trail, but had not pursued it long before we arrived at the dwelling of Richard Collins. What a scene was presented for our vision! For cruelty and pitiless barbarity, it beggars description. Here was one of the largest and most respectable families of the settlement, "a slaughtered heap." Indignation and revenge took possession of our hearts. "Foul fiends and savage barbarians, we will avenge the dead!" was the universal cry. Leaving a number of our little party to perform the melancholy ceremonies of an interment, we continued in hot pursuit; and, about 3:00 p.m., we were three miles in their rear.

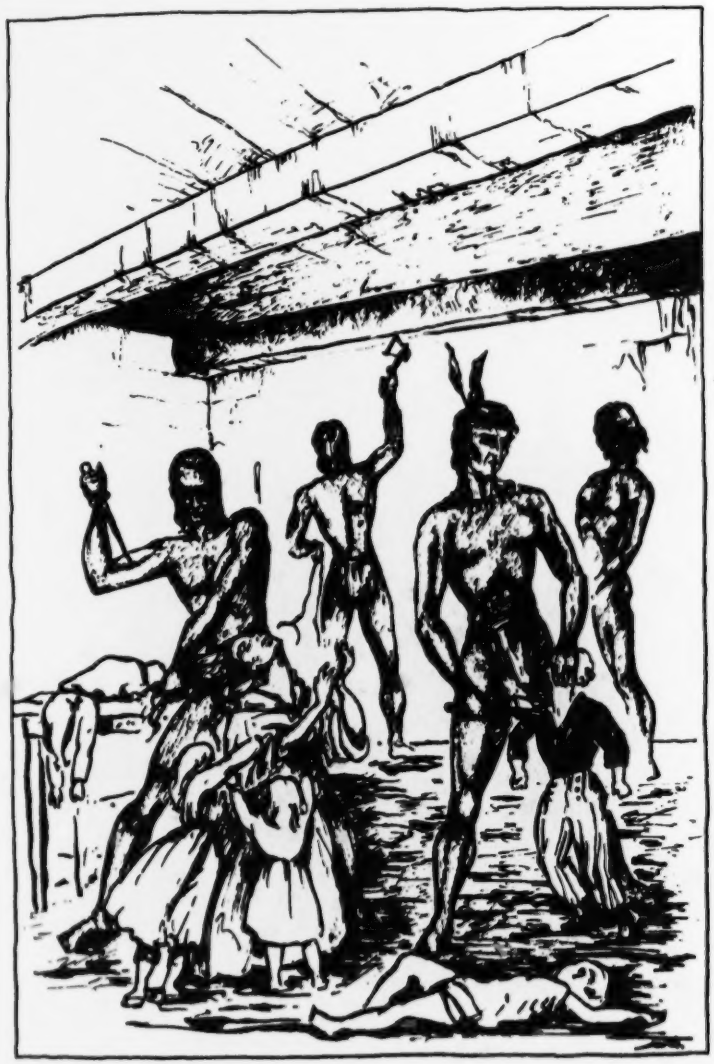
Captain Dewalt, who was out with a scouting party from Salem, discovered the same Indians; and, though he was ignorant of their heartless atrocities, a skirmish ensued, which resulted only in the retaking of the plunder and the wounding of three Indians with the loss of one white man by the name of Sinks. The Indians now separated. We pursued them till they crossed the Muscatatuck, when all their traces were lost, and we were compelled to abandon the pursuit as hopeless.

INDIANA STATE SENTINEL, January 24, 1853

Dillon account

Within the present limits of the county of Scott, there was, in 1812, a place that was called the "Pigeon Roost" settlement. This settlement, which was founded by a few families in 1809, was confined to about a square mile of land; and it was separated from all other settlements by a distance of five or six miles. In the afternoon of the third of September, 1812, Jeremiah Payne and a man whose name was Coffman were hunting for "bee trees" in the woods about two miles north of the Pigeon Roost settlement and were surprised and killed by a party of Indians. This party of Indians, which consisted of ten or twelve warriors, nearly all of whom were Shawnees, then attacked the Pigeon Roost settlement about sunset on the evening of the third of September; and, in the space of about one hour, they killed one man, five women, and sixteen children. The bodies of some of these victims of savage warfare were burned in the fires that consumed the cabins in which the murders were perpetrated.

The persons who were massacred at this settlement were Henry Collings and his wife; Mrs. Payne, wife of Jeremiah Payne, and eight of her children; Mrs. Richard Collings and seven of her children; Mrs. John Morris and her only child; and Mrs. Morris, the mother of John Morris. Mrs. Jane Biggs, with her three small children, escaped from the settlement, eluded the vigilance of the Indians, and, about an hour before daylight on the next morning, arrived at the house of her brother, Zebulon Collings, who lived about six miles from the scene of the carnage. William Collings, who had passed the age of sixty years, defended his house for the space of three-quarters of an hour against the attacks of the Indians. In



this defense, he was assisted by Captain John Morris. There were two children in the house. As soon as it began to grow dark, Mr. Collings and Captain Morris escaped with the two children (John Collings and Lydia Collings) from the house, eluded the pursuit of the Indians, and, on the morning of the next day, reached the house of Zebulon Collings.

A number of the militia of Clark County immediately proceeded to the scene of the Pigeon Roost massacre, where they found several of the mangled bodies of the dead surrounded by the smoking ruins of the houses. These remains of the murdered persons were brought together and buried in one grave.

On the afternoon of the fourth of September, about one hundred and fifty mounted riflemen, under the command of Major John McCoy, followed the trail of the Indians about twenty miles, when "the darkness of the night" compelled them to give up the pursuit. A small scouting party, under the command of Captain Devault, discovered and made an attack upon the retreating Indians, who, after killing one of Captain Devault's men, continued their flight through the woods and eluded the pursuit of the scouting party.

On the sixth of September, the militia of Clark County was reinforced by sixty mounted volunteers from Jefferson County, under the command of Colonel William McFarland; and, on the evening of the seventh, about three hundred fifty volunteers from Kentucky were ready to unite with the Indiana militia of Clark and Jefferson counties, for the purpose of making an attack on the Delaware Indians--some of whom were suspected of having been engaged in the destruction of the Pigeon Roost settlement. It seems, however,

that a spirit of jealousy which prevailed among some of the officers defeated the intentions of those who, at that time, proposed to destroy the towns of the friendly Delawares who lived on the western branch of the White River.

After the time of the Pigeon Roost massacre, many of the settlers on the northern and western frontiers of Clark, Jefferson, Harrison, and Knox counties lived in a state of alarm until the close of the war in 1815. Mr. Zebulon Collings, who lived within six miles of the Pigeon Roost settlement, says: "The manner in which I used to work in those perilous times was as follows: On all occasions I carried my rifle, tomahawk, and butcher knife, with a loaded pistol in my belt. When I went to plow, I laid my gun on the plowed ground and stuck up a stick by it for a mark, so I could get it quickly in case it was wanted. I had two good dogs. I took one into the house, leaving the other out. The one outside was expected to give the alarm, which would cause the one inside to bark. I would then be awakened, and my guns were always loaded. I kept my horses in a stable close to the house, which had a porthole so that I could shoot to the stable door. During the two years, I never went from home with any certainty of returning--not knowing the minute I might receive a ball from an unknown hand; but in the midst of all these dangers, God, who never sleeps nor slumbers, has kept me."

John Dillon, HISTORY OF INDIANA (Indianapolis: Bingham & Doughty, 1859), pp. 492-94.

...m & Doughty, 1859).

from Arville Funk, The Hoosier Scrapbook, 1981. Reprinted with the author's permission.

Pigeon Roost massacre

24 settlers are slain in 1812 Indian raid on Scott County area

The first and most tragic of several Indian raids and massacres in the Indiana Territory during the War of 1812 occurred at the little settlement of Pigeon Roost in Vienna Township of Scott County a few miles south of present-day Scottsburg.

The Pigeon Roost community had been settled by an old rugged frontiersman and soldier, William E. Collings, who brought his family and relatives plus several neighbors from Kentucky to Indiana in the spring of 1809. The settlement was named after the roosting place of thousands of passenger pigeons who provided a plentiful food supply for the settlers and were slaughtered and sold for 25 cents per bushel to settlers at Jeffersonville. The founder of the settlement had served as a soldier in the Revolutionary War and had become known and respected for his marksmanship with a rifle. Although there were no Indians living around the Pigeon Roost community, several groups hunted in that vicinity and the settlers were accustomed to seeing them.

With the outbreak of the War of 1812, many of the men of the Pigeon Roost community went off to war with Gen. William Henry Harrison's Indiana Militia. By August of 1812, the British had captured Ft. Michilimackinac, Ft. Detroit and Ft. Dearborn (at Chicago) and were in command of much of the old Northwest Territory. Several of the Indian tribes in the Northwest rushed to join the British victors and this started the raids on the scattered settlements in the Indiana Territory.

As a precaution, three blockhouses—one six miles north of Pigeon Roost near Vienna, one 8 miles southeast of Pigeon Roost at Silver Creek and one at Zebulon Collings' farm 5 miles fouth of Pigeon Roost—had been built for the protection of the settlers.

On the first of September 1812, a party of Indians (mostly Shawnees) crossed White River near present-day Sparksville in Jackson County. Traveling southeasterly, the party moved into present-day Scott County on Sept. 3. This group of a dozen or more was thought to be on a hunting expedition.

(Although it has been thought that they were all Shawnees, there is evidence that a few Miamis and at least one Delaware brave were involved in the massacre. A month after the massacre, Gen. Harrison, in a letter to the U.S. secretary of war, stated that he was holding a Miami braves prisoner at Ft. Wayne who had admitted being with the war party at Pigeon Roost. Also, one of the Pigeon Roost settlers identified a Delaware brave who had hunted around the settlement as a guide for the group.)

In the late afternoon of Sept. 3, the war party arrived at the farm of Elias Payne who lived northeast of present-day Vienna. Payne's wife and seven children were the first victims. The Indians scattered household goods and burned the cabin. Circling westward to avoid the Vienna blockhouse, the party came upon Isaac Coffman and Elias Payne, who were hunting bee trees and were unarmed. Coffman was killed instantly, but Payne, though mortally wounded, succeeded in fleeing some distance. His body was found the next day and buried beside the Salem Road a mile west of Vienna. The grave is no longer in existence, as it was demolished during the construction of Interstate 65. The hostile party continued south along the old settlement road toward the cabin of Elias's brother, Jeremiah Payne. However, Jeremiah's cattle, which were grazing in woods north of the cabin, were stampeded by the Indians and the noise warned them and they escaped to the blockhouse in Vienna.

Just south of the Jeremiah Payne house, the war party surprised Mrs. Henry Collings, who was returning on horseback to her home at Pigeon Roost from a visit with Mrs. Jeremiah Payne. Mrs. Collings was murdered and her body mutilated.

Just before sundown, the party arrived at the Pigeon Roost settlement.

The home of Richard Collings, a son of the settlement's founder, was at the east end of the community. While Richard was serving with Harrisons' militia at Vincennes, his wife and seven small children, were attacked and killed by part of the group within a few minutes. The remaining members of the war party raided the Henry Collings cabin. Henry was pulling flax in a field near his cabin when he was shot and wounded. However, he managed to crawl under a large pile of flax where he hid until the next day. His would was severe and he died within a week, but not before identifying Little Killbuck, a Delaware brave, as the Indians' guide and the one who had shot him.

Just west of Henry Collings' cabin was the cabin of William E. Collings. Old Capt. Norris, of Charlestown, who had been wounded in the shoulder and disabled at the Battle of Tippecanoe the year before, was staying at the cabin. Also, there were the youngest children of Collings: Lydia, 15, and John, 13.

At the first sight of the Indians, john rushed toward the cabin. William Collings upheld his fame as a marksman when he killed the pursuing Indian with a well-directed shot just as he was about to tomahawk the boy. Of the four trapped in the cabin, only William provided armed resistance since Norris could not fire effectively because of the shoulder wound. William Collings proved to be the only resistance the war party was to meet during the entire massacre and he is credited by family tradition with killing four of the Indians in defending his cabin home.

As darkness approached, William Collings realized the Indians would set fire to the cabin, so the four remaining members of the settlement decided to slip out after dark and try to reach Zeubion Collings' blockhouse south of the settlement. Zebulon was another son of the founder of Pigeon Roost. During the escape, William became separated from Norris and the two children and finally reached Zebulon's house the next morning. Norris and the children wandered in the woods all night and finally returned to Pigeon Roost after the Indians had departed.

After meeting the armed resistance of William Collings and losing part of their number, the Indians turned west and after a few miles came to the cabin of John Morris. Morris also was away with Gen. Harrison's army and the war party killed Morris' mother, wife and child.

The family of John Biggs lived just west of the Morris home. Biggs also was away with the army at Vincennes and had left his wife and three children at home. Mrs. Biggs, who was a daughter of William Collings, fled with the children to the woods near the cabin. One of the children was just an infant and, when the mother attempted to keep the baby from crying out, she accidentally smothered the child with her shawl. However, she and two other children escaped.

By the morning of Sep. 4, the war party headed north to escape the posse of settlers they knew would soon be in pursuit. That morning, Jeremiah Payne rode into Charlestown in Clark County and brought the news of the massacre. In a few short hours, over 200 armed men under Maj. John McCoy left Charlestown in pursuit of the Indians. The militia trailed them as far as the forks of the Muscatuck where they wound the river flooded and could not cross. They then turned back and marched to Pigeon Roost for the sad task of identifying and burying the victims of the massacre.

The Pigeon Roost Massacre

Two accounts of the massacre prepared by the staff of the Public Library of Fort Wayne and Allen County, 1953.

Foreward

1. What was happening in the Indiana Territory at the time of the Pigeon Roost massacre?

2. What was the date and location of the massacre?

******

Indiana State Sentinel account, January 24, 1853, by an eye-witness

3. Why did this man write his recollections down?

4. List the households, in order, that were attacked.

5. What emotional words does this man use to describe the raiders? Why would he use these terms?

*****

John Dillon account, History of Indiana, 1859, pp.492-494.

6. List the individuals killed, and the ones who escaped in two separate columns.

7. Who set out after the raiders?

8. Why were the Indians never caught?

9. How did the massacre change the lives of those who still lived in the Indiana Territory?

*****

Arville Funk article, from The Hoosier Scrapbook, 1981, page 4.

10. Find three facts that add to your knowledge or change your knowledge about the massacre.

11. Which of the three accounts is the most emotional? personal? factual? Tell why you chose each answer.

12. Why should students of history read more than just one account of a historic event?

TRAIL of the
PIGEON ROOST
MASSACRE

N

Trail of the Pigeon Roost Massacre

Map Key:

1. Elias Payne home, family killed
2. Vienna Blockhouse
3. Elias Payne and Isaac Coffman killed
4. Jeremiah Payne's home
5. Mrs. Henry Collings killed
6. Richard Collings' home, family killed
7. Henry Collings' home
8. William E. Collings' home
9. John Morris' home, family killed
10. Dr. John Ritchie's home
11. John Bigg's home
12. Zebulon Collings' home and Blockhouse
13. Charlestown

△ Present Pigeon Roost Monument

Lesson # 3 -- Field Trip to Pigeon Roost Memorial

Objectives: Students will--

1) recall sequence of events concerning the massacre upon arrival at the site

2) note the inscription on the memorial, the location and upkeep of the site

3) collect data from the cemetery

4) reflect upon the event in a period of silence

Materials:
camera
Indiana road map
Scott County map
dark crayons and large sheets of newsprint

Introduction:

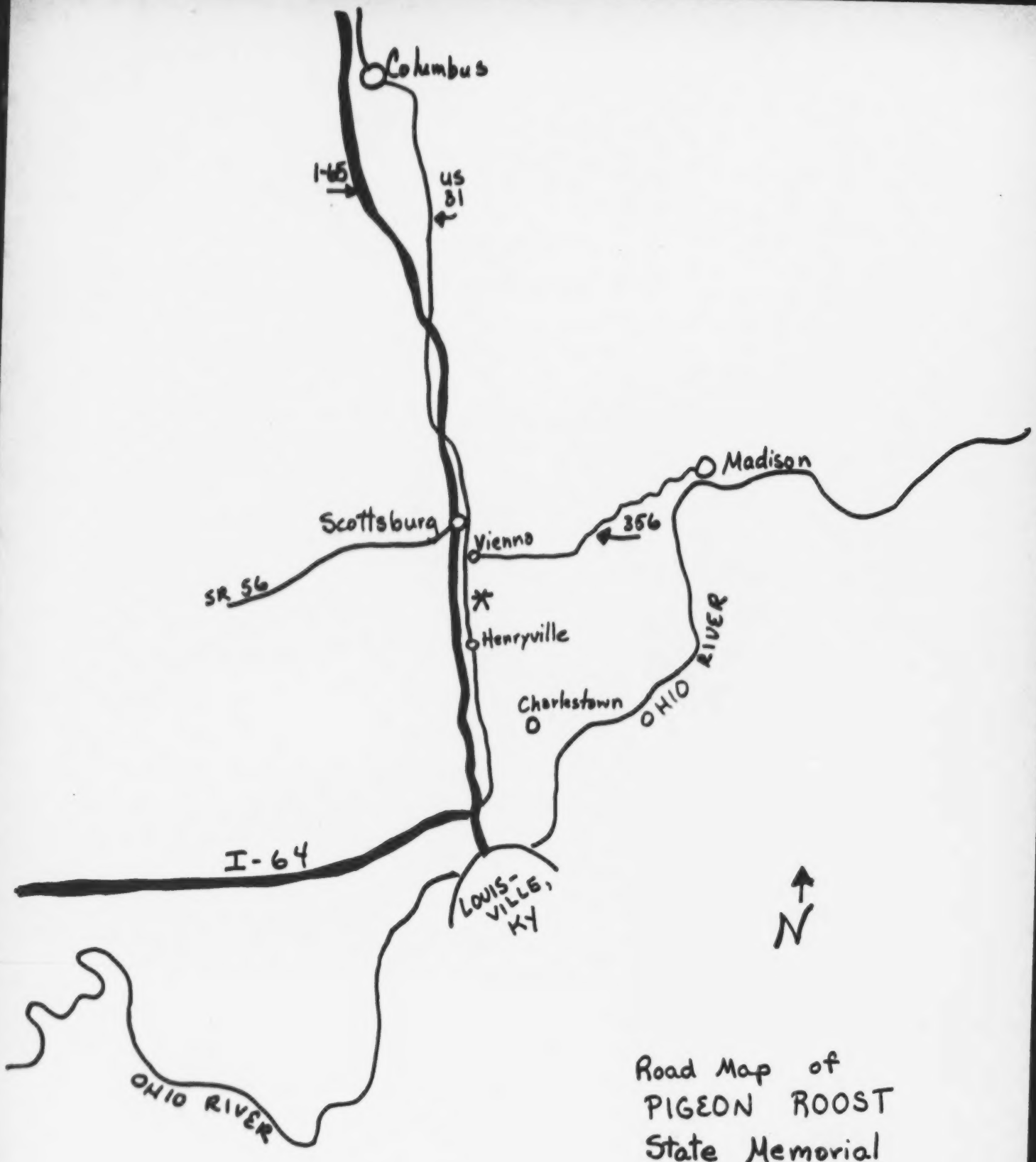
Students will trace the travel to the site on an Indiana road map.
Students will trace the route of the raiding Indians on a Scott County map and locate the site.
Review the list of victims and survivors and the Pigeon Roost maps done in class for lesson #2.

Development:

Visit the site. Walk around the memorial, noting inscriptions, upkeep of the site.
Tour the cemetery, making rubbings of tombstones with the same family names of victims and survivors.
Engage the assistance of a Friends of Pigeon Roost resource person to speak to the group at the site.
(Contact Mrs. Helen Trueblood, Pigeon Roost Massacre Association, R.R. #3, Scottsburg, Indiana 47170)

Conclusion:

Reflect upon the event in a period of silence before leaving the site.
Analyze the data collected in the cemetery. Discuss the feelings of being on the site, the condition of the site, the appropriateness of the location, and future of the site.



Road Map of
PIGEON ROOST
State Memorial

Lesson # 4 -- Cause and Effect of the Pigeon Roost Massacre
RESOLUTIONS

Objectives: Students will:

1) analyze events that ultimately resulted in the Pigeon Roost massacre

2) make associations of cause and effect

3) evaluate the immediate solutions at the time of the massacre

4) generate solutions in light of hindsight

Materials: pencil
paper

Introduction:

Read list of events leading up to the Pigeon Roost massacre from the time line

Divide class into groups of 3 to 5; each group will determine a facilitator and recorder

Development:

Within each group come to consensus on the three major causes of the massacre (5-10 minutes, record)
Within each group come to consensus on the three major results of the massacre (5-10 minutes, record)
Within each group discuss teh success of the solutions to the Indian conflict in the early 1800's; record a group opinon about these solutions
Generate two or three "better" solutions to the conflict; record

Conclusions:

Reassemble as a large class, each recorder reports on the groups findings
As a class, evaluate the solutions to the Indian conflict in the early 1800's; discuss the best solutions
Ask students for any insights achieved as a result of this study

Pigeon Roost Massacre

Victims

1. Isaac Coffman
   Elias Payne
2. Mrs. Elias Payne
   Seven Children
4. Mrs. Henry Collings
5. Mrs. Richard Collings
   Seven Children
6. Henry Collings
8. Mrs. John Morris
   child
   mother-in-law
9. Child of Mrs. John Biggs

Others:
John Zink--ranger from Washington County, killed in pursuit of Indian raiders

Survivors

3. Jeremiah Payne and family
7. William Collings
   Lydia and John Collings
   Captain Norris
10. Mrs. John Biggs
    Two children
11. Dr. John Ritchie
    wife Siche

Others:
Mrs. Beal, two children
Mr. and Mrs. Ben Yount
two children, another born that night
Mrs. Betsy Johnson

Total lost: twenty-five (9 adult, 16 children)

William Collings, patriarch of the settlement, lost one son (Henry), two daughters-in-law (Mrs. Henry, Mrs. Richard), and eight grandchildren in the raid

PIGEON ROOST MASSACRE

Enrichment activities

Make a timeline of all the events concerning American/Indian conflicts from 1893 to 1816.

Write a letter to a relative living in another area from the viewpoint of a survivor of the Pigeon Roost Massacre.

Make a salt and flour map of the area around Pigeon Roost, including the three blockhouses.

Write a tall tale about William Collings and his heroic deeds on the Indiana frontier.

Make a map of the Indiana or Northwest Territory showing all the Indian conflicts and where they occured.

Design a better monument for the massacre site. Write an original epitaph and dedication ceremony.

Write a poem or ballad about the massacre.

Write your own newspaper article or radio news script as an on-the-spot reporter the day after the event.

Create a crossword puzzle with clues that can be answered with facts about the event.

Organize a debate over the land issue.

Made a model of one of the family cabins OR of one of the blockhouses.

Write a one to two page essay telling everyone what we should learn about conflict, settling conflict and compromise.

Make a bulletin board for your class about this event.

Prepare questions for an oral history interview with William Collings, Mrs. John Biggs, and Captain Devault. Make sure each list relates to that person's experiences.

Write a chapter for the book, Indiana's Frontier Tragedies, which tells of the massacre.

Write a one page defense paper from the perspective of an Indian on the raid. Give his reasons for participating in the massacre.

Design some artwork and write an epitaph for each of the victims of the massacre.

Paint or draw a mural of the Pigeon Roost settlement before the massacre

Pigeon Roost Lesson Plans Bibliography

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